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Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution

Thirty-third session
Geneva, 8–11 December 2014

Report of the Executive Body on its thirty-third session

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I. Introduction

1. The thirty-third session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was held from 8 to 11 December 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. The decisions adopted by the Executive Body at the session can be found in an addendum to the present report (ECE/EB.AIR/127/Add.1).

A. Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following Parties to the Convention: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union (EU), Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. Delegates from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan also attended the meeting.

3. Representatives from the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) were present. In addition, the Asia Centre for Air Pollution Research, the European Environmental Bureau and the University of Lisbon were represented.

B. Organizational matters

4. Mr. M. Williams (United Kingdom) chaired the meeting. The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) welcomed the participants.

5. The Executive Body adopted the agenda for its thirty-third session, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/126.

6. The Executive Body adopted the report of its thirty-second session (ECE/EB.AIR/122 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2).

II. Report on credentials

7. In accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, decision 2010/19, annex, as amended (ECE/EB.AIR/122/Add.1, decision 2013/1)), delegations were invited to submit their credentials to the secretariat within 24 hours after the opening of the session. The officers of the session reported that 31 Parties to the Convention were present with credentials. The Executive Body adopted the report on credentials.

III. Matters arising from meetings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and other related meetings

8. The secretariat informed participants that, at its twentieth session (Geneva, 28–31 October 2014), the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy had selected two main

themes for the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016): (a) greening the economy in the pan-European region; and (b) improving air quality for a better environment and human health.

9. The Executive Body took note of the decision of the Committee on Environmental Policy, and requested the Bureau and the secretariat to take the necessary action to provide inputs relevant to the work under the Convention in the preparation process for the Ministerial Conference.

10. Following presentations by the ECE secretariat, the Executive Body also took note of activities of relevance to the Convention under the ECE Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme and the Transport Division.

IV. Review of implementation of the 2014–2015 workplan

11. Opening the review of implementation of the 2014–2015 workplan for the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/122/Add.2), the secretariat presented a list of meetings and official documentation for the Convention between its thirty-third and thirty-fifth (inclusive) sessions (informal document No. 5), and highlighted issues related to the elaboration of the 2016–2017 workplan.

12. Following a discussion, the Executive Body:

(a) Adopted the list of meetings and official documentation for the Convention between its thirty-third and thirty-fifth (inclusive) sessions, as amended during the session (see annex), and requested the secretariat to prepare and submit those documents for translation;

(b) Requested the subsidiary bodies, task forces and expert groups, scientific centres and International Cooperative Programmes (ICPs) under the Convention to provide timely inputs to the Bureau and the secretariat so that they could elaborate and submit a draft 2016–2017 workplan for the Convention to the Executive Body at its next session.

A. Science

13. With regard to the implementation of workplan item 1 (science), the Chair of the Working Group on Effects presented a summary of the main issues discussed at and the results of the thirty-third session of the Working Group on Effects (Geneva, 17–19 September 2014), highlighting the conclusions and recommendations for consideration by the Executive Body. The main messages from all activities carried out under the Working Group were contained in the 2014 joint progress report on the activities of the International Cooperative Programmes and the Joint Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2014/3). He also introduced the report on the deposition of air pollutants to vegetation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central and South-East Asia and their impacts (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/5), and pointed to the need for effects monitoring programmes to be established in those subregions. Another highlight of the Working Group's thirty-third session was the decision to issue a new call for data which — for the first time —included data for the development of critical loads for biodiversity based on the so called Habitat-Suitability Index. Finally, the Working Group Chair welcomed the closer collaboration between the Working Group and the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP), and in particular the joint sessions that had been held in 2013 and 2014.

14. The Chair of the Task Force on Health presented the Task Force report, "Residential heating with wood and coal: health impacts and policy options in Europe and North America" (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/6). Burning solid fuels in the home created air pollution both indoors and outdoors, and scientific evidence linked that air pollution source to serious health effects. The paper identified policy needs regarding the future use of biomass burning and heating for energy production and highlighted the need for a better alignment between climate and air pollution policies in many countries for the protection of public health. A specific recommendation against the use of unprocessed coal was proposed, and the household combustion of kerosene was discouraged while further research into its health impacts was conducted. The potential co-benefits for health and climate of reducing residential heating emissions were also underscored. The document built on and summarized the recently published *WHO guidelines for indoor air quality: household fuel combustion*,[1] which provided guidance on policies and the impacts of different fuels and technologies for cooking, heating and lighting on health.

15. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the progress in recent research on the health impacts of air pollution and the importance of the burden of disease from air pollution;

(b) Welcomed the report from the Task Force on Health on household fuel combustion;

(c) Encouraged the wide dissemination of the advice and availability of the material in the Russian language.

16. The co-Chair of the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and one of the lead authors for the 2016 Convention Assessment Report presented the draft outline of the report and its preliminary key messages. The report would describe what had been achieved, what room remained for further improvement and to what extent synergies with other policy areas — such as climate, energy, health and food — could be exploited. The final draft of the report would be presented at the session of the Executive Body in 2016. Preliminary versions would be discussed during the joint meeting of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects in September 2015 and the Working Group on Strategies and Review in December 2015. The authors of the Assessment Report would have a kick-off meeting from 20 to 22 January 2015 in Oslo.

17. The Executive Body welcomed the proposed outline of the 2016 Assessment Report and suggested to make available short, focused summaries of the key messages for various audiences. Such summaries or fact sheets could, e.g., focus on health issues, ecosystems, challenges in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia or challenges at the Northern Hemispheric scale. The Executive Body requested the Bureau to prepare the relevant information for consideration at its thirty-fourth session in December 2015, with a view to presenting the report at the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.

18. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body reported good progress in implementating the science-related workplan activities, presenting a summary of the main issues discussed at and the results of the thirty-eighth session of the EMEP Steering Body (Geneva, 15–17 September 2014), and highlighting conclusions and recommendations for consideration by the Executive Body. In particular, she presented the outcomes of a review of applications submitted by Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany and Spain in accordance with Executive Body decisions 2012/3, 2012/4 and 2012/12 (see ECE/EB.AIR/111/Add.1 and ECE/EB.AIR/113/Add.1) for adjustments to emission

[1] WHO (Geneva, 2014). Available from http://www.who.int/indoorair/guidelines/hhfc/en/.

reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them under the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol).

19. Concerning the EMEP Monitoring Strategy 2010–2019 (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2009/15), the Steering Body Chair stressed the need to maintain a high level of quality for measurements and chemical analyses, as well as to revitalize the interest of the Parties in analytical performance. The next Intensive Observation Period in 2016 would focus on particulate matter measurements.

20. A key contribution from the EMEP Steering Body in 2015 would be the observed and modelled air quality trend analysis report, which would aim at describing trends for pollutants managed by the Convention protocols over the past 20 years. Results from that work would contribute to the 2016 Convention Assessment Report. Moreover, it would provide an opportunity for enhanced cooperation between EMEP and the Working Group on Effects on trends in air pollutant effects. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body also welcomed the closer collaboration between EMEP and the Working Group and the joint sessions that had been held in 2013 and 2014.

21. The co-Chair of the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections introduced the Guidance for Parties Making Adjustment Applications and Guidance for the Expert Review of Adjustment Applications (informal document No. 6), thanking the United Kingdom and Sweden for their financial support and the European Commission for its constructive input. In particular, the guidance provided an extensive interpretation of "new source" and "significant changes" in the national emission inventories.

22. The Executive Body noted that, based on the review of the first round of applications by Parties to adjust their inventories or emission reduction commitments, the EMEP Steering Body had identified a number of ways to improve the review process and its transparency for the benefit of both Parties and the Expert Review Team. It further took note of the draft guidance developed by the Task Force to further aid in the review.

23. The Executive Body also acknowledged that the report of the thirty-eighth session of the EMEP Steering Body (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2014/2) contained a number of recommendations to improve the quality of the technical review, improve the transparency of the review process and clarify for Parties the circumstances under which applications for adjustments previously rejected might be resubmitted for review. The report also called for clearer guidance related to the "extraordinary" circumstances under which an adjustment might be applied for, as set out in paragraph 6 of decision 2012/3.

24. The Executive Body decided to adopt a new decision which, inter alia, would amend decision 2012/12 containing previous guidance, to clarify issues related to the circumstances under which a Party might make such an application. A break-out group, chaired by a delegate from Canada, met four times to develop the text of the decision, and to discuss other considerations related to the adjustment procedure, which it decided not to include in the decision, but agreed were nonetheless important.

25. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to produce and publish the Guidance for Parties Making Adjustment Applications and Guidance for the Expert Review of Adjustment Applications contained in informal document No. 6 and its appendices, as revised during the session, in the three official languages of ECE.

26. The Executive Body:

(a) Noted that 2014 was the first year in which Parties had used the adjustment procedure;

(b) Noted with concern that part of the EMEP core budget for the Centre for Emission Inventories and Projections (CEIP) had been used to review adjustment applications and that, as a consequence, CEIP had not been able to complete all of the tasks assigned to it in the 2014–2015 workplan for the implementation of the Convention;

(c) Recognized that the number of experts on the EMEP roster of experts had not been sufficient to perform both the reviews of the adjustment applications submitted in 2014 and the full number of Stage-3 in-depth reviews of the emission inventories scheduled in the EMEP workplan for 2014;

(d) Encouraged Parties to contribute voluntarily to financing the work of CEIP on review of adjustment applications;

(e) Urged Parties that had not yet done so to nominate one or more experts to the EMEP roster of experts, as a matter of priority;

(f) Requested the EMEP Steering Body to give priority to the scheduled Stage-3 in-depth emission inventory reviews if there was a lack of experts or sufficient voluntary contributions for doing both the review of the adjustment applications and the emission inventories included in the EMEP work schedule;

(g) Also requested the EMEP Steering Body to give priority to reviewing adjustment applications submitted by those Parties that had made voluntary contributions to CEIP or that had nominated experts to the EMEP roster of experts;

(h) Requested the secretariat to inform the Implementation Committee of applications that had been withdrawn or rejected;

(i) Noted the decision of the EMEP Steering Body to support the recommendations put forward by the Expert Review Team in relation to its review of the adjustment applications submitted in 2014 (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2014/10);

(j) Also noted that a number of applications had been left in an "open" status in the recommendations referenced in document ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2014/10 due to complications arising from the relatively new nature of the adjustment process and insufficient resources, that that did not constitute a precedent for future applications and, moreover, that all efforts should be made to ensure applications were not kept open for more than one additional year;

(k) Further noted that if Parties disagreed with decisions of the EMEP Steering Body in relation to applications for adjustments to inventories, they had the option of making a submission to the Implementation Committee in accordance with decision 2012/25;

(l) Adopted decision 2014/1 on improving the guidance for adjustments under the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purpose of comparing total national emissions with them.

27. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body provided an updated list of Parties scheduled for stage-3 in-depth review in 2015, as follows: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands, Republic of Moldova Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine. Finland had requested to postpone its stage-3 review of its emission inventory to 2016.

28. The Executive Body requested the secretariat to inform the Parties in question about the 2015 Stage-3 reviews and to remind them about the obligation to provide their updated emission inventories, as well as Informative Inventory Reports, to enable the scheduled reviews.

B. Policy

29. The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review reported on the implementation of relevant issues under item 2 of the 2014–2015 workplan (policy). He drew attention to the exchange of information, experiences and good practices that had been initiated to promote the implementation of the Convention's protocols and facilitate accession and ratification, in particular, in line with Executive Body decision 2013/2 (see ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/112 and annexes II and III).

30. Participants exchanged information on the ways to improve such experience-sharing sessions in the future, specifically noting that the number of presentations should be limited to allow for more interactive discussions.

31. A co-Chair of the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues introduced a draft mandate for a proposed Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (ibid., annex I) for adoption by the Executive Body.

32. A co-Chair of the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues reported on the status of preparation of the guidance document on control techniques for emissions of sulphur, nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and dust from mobile sources in accordance with article 3, paragraph 6, of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended.

33. A co-Chair of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen presented the revised ECE Framework Code for Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/8 and informal document No. 8) for adoption by the Executive Body.

34. A representative of the United Kingdom announced that her country wished to withdraw from its co-leadership of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen.

35. A representative of Denmark recalled that her country had taken over its co-leadership of the Task Force from the Netherlands in December 2012. Denmark would continue to lead the work under the Task Force, but other Parties were invited to join it in doing so. Denmark would not be in the position to provide the financial support required for the technical secretariat of the Task Force or for travel of eligible participants to the Task Force meetings.

36. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the report of the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review;

(b) Adopted decision 2014/2 on the establishment of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues;

(c) Took note of the progress in preparation of the guidance document on control techniques for emissions of sulphur, NO_x, VOCs and dust from mobile sources, and requested the Working Group on Strategies and Review to submit the final draft of the guidance document for adoption by the Executive Body at its thirty-fifth session in 2016;

(d) Requested the Working Group on Strategies and Review to submit the final draft of the guidance document on the methods for calculation of emissions of VOCs for adoption by the Executive Body at its thirty-fifth session;

(e) Adopted the revised ECE Framework Code for Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions, as contained in informal document No. 8 and amended during the session, and mandated the secretariat to issue the final version of the Framework Code in the three official languages of the ECE. It further invited Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol to use the revised Framework Code as a reference document in establishing and

updating their national advisory codes of good agricultural practices to control ammonia emissions as required by paragraph 3 of annex IX to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended;

(f) Adopted decision 2014/3 on the leadership of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen, amending decision 2007/1 to reflect the change in the lead countries of the Task Force.

C. Compliance

37. The Chair of the Implementation Committee presented the results of the Committee's work in 2014, as contained in its seventeenth report (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/2), the review of compliance by Parties with their reporting obligations in 2014 (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/3) and the Committee's recommendations to the Executive Body (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/4).

38. The Implementation Committee Chair drew attention to the differentiated approach applied by the Committee in cases where particular attention of the Executive Body had been deemed necessary and cases with minor exceedances and/or where the political will of Parties to reach compliance was strong. Direct contact with the Parties concerned, through their participation in the Committee's sessions, had proved to be an effective instrument which was increasingly being used by the Committee in its deliberations.

39. In particular, the Committee Chair expressed the Committee's appreciation for the decision by one Party to not submit an application for the use of the inventory adjustment procedure and to concentrate instead on actual emission reduction measures.

40. Finally, he encouraged Parties to continue to work closely with the Committee by sending the required information and responding to requests from the secretariat.

41. The Executive Body took note of the report of the Chair of the Implementation Committee.

42. A representative from the United States voiced concerns regarding the Committee's considerations of the compliance of the EU with the Gothenburg Protocol (ref. 5/13 (NO_x)) (see ECE/EB.AIR/2014/2, paras. 53–58). The concerns related in particular to the scope of the legal analysis underlying the Committee's finding that the EU should be treated as the "EU 15" for purposes of its article 3 obligations.

43. The Chair of the Implementation Committee explained the reasoning of the Committee in more detail, and particularly pointed out that the Committee's conclusion was based on good faith when following the approach of not holding the currently configured "EU 28" liable to an absolute, territory-based obligation entered into at a time when the EU consisted of only 15 member States.

44. The European Commission informed the Executive Body that it had not yet been able to prepare a formal response addressing the concerns voiced by the United States.

45. The Executive Body decided to request the Implementation Committee to continue to review the compliance of the EU with article 3, paragraph 1, of the Gothenburg Protocol and to report the results of its further considerations to the Executive Body. The Implementation Committee could invite interested Parties to provide it with additional information related to those issues, but not to attend its meetings.

46. The Chair of the Executive Body reminded delegations that at its thirty-first session in December 2012 it had elected one new member to the Implementation Committee for a term of two years. At its thirty-second session in December 2013 it had re-elected three Committee members for consecutive terms of two years and five Committee members for

first terms of two years. The Executive Body was therefore expected to elect one member to the Committee.

47. The secretariat informed participants of the one nomination received for a member of the Implementation Committee from Norway.

48. The Executive Body re-elected Norway (Ms. A. Gaustad) for a second term on the Implementation Committee.

49. The Executive Body further adopted:

(a) Decision 2014/4 concerning compliance by Cyprus with the Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes (ref. 1/08);

(b) Decision 2014/5 concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with the Protocol on Heavy Metals (ref. 23/13 (Cd); ref. 24/13 (Hg));

(c) Decision 2014/6 concerning compliance by Estonia with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 2/10 (HCB));

(d) Decision 2014/7 concerning compliance Latvia with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 3/10 (HCB); ref. 11/10 (diox./furan));

(e) Decision 2014/8 concerning compliance by Albania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Montenegro and Sweden with their reporting obligations.

D. Capacity-building to promote ratification and implementation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

50. The secretariat informed participants about the progress in implementing capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, in particular the workshops held in Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, and the participation in the meeting of the Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development in Central Asia and the final conference of the EU Air Quality Governance project.

51. The Chair of the Coordinating Group on the promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Coordinating Group) presented progress in the work of the Group in 2014 and its plans for activities in 2015–2016 (informal document No. 9). Activities in 2014 included an update of the Russian version of the EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook, participation in the workshop organized by the Task Force on Heavy Metals in cooperation with the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues to promote the ratification of the three latest protocols, and a meeting of the Expert Group.

52. Georgia reported on the results of the workshop on emission inventories organized by the secretariat, and indicated a need for additional support in other areas, such as estimating emission reduction targets and making emission projections. The EU informed participants of the completion of its Air Quality Governance project implemented over four years in countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The final project report and the results of the gap analysis that could be of interest to the Coordinating Group would be available soon.

53. The Executive Body took note of the information presented. It welcomed the proposal of the Coordinating Group, as presented in informal document No. 9, and called on the Coordinating Group to implement the outlined activities in 2015–2016.

E. Communication and outreach

54. The secretariat presented the report on outreach activities (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/7), summarizing existing activities and highlighting possible additional opportunities for cooperation.

55. The Executive Body took note of the report by the secretariat and entrusted its Bureau and the secretariat with contacting relevant regional networks and agreements with a view to determining possible areas of collaboration and presenting a report summarizing the results of that information-gathering exercise to the Executive Body at its thirty-fifth session. The Executive Body recalled that future activities related to communication and outreach should be undertaken based on the availability of resources.

V. Proposal by Montenegro for adjustments to annex II to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone

56. In accordance with article 13 of the Gothenburg Protocol, Montenegro had submitted a proposal to the Executive Body at its thirty-first session in December 2012 to adjust annex II to the Protocol by adding to it its name together with emission levels and emission ceilings. The Executive Body had subsequently invited Montenegro to submit a revised proposal for consideration by the EMEP Steering Body at its thirty-seventh session (Geneva, 9–11 September 2013). However, in September 2013 a representative of Montenegro informed the Steering Body that, owing to insufficient human and technical capacity, the country had been unable to respond to the request and that support was needed with respect to national inventory development, gridding emissions and providing emission projections. The Executive Body at its thirty-second session in December 2013 subsequently decided to defer a decision on the proposed adjustment and had invited the EMEP Steering Body and its Chair to continue the dialogue with the delegation of Montenegro with a view to providing the rationale behind its proposal for emission ceilings.

57. At its thirty-eighth session in September 2014 the EMEP Steering Body had discussed the proposal again, and Montenegro's representative had acknowledged that the proposal had to be revised and updated estimates for emission levels in 1990 and 2010 had to be submitted, in line with the main goal of the Gothenburg Protocol to control and reduce emissions. (In Montenegro's proposal of 2012, the proposed ceilings for 2010 for sulphur and NO_x emissions were significantly higher than the respective estimates for 1990.)

58. Prior to the thirty-third session of the Executive Body, the secretariat in collaboration with a Vice-Chair of the Steering Body had invited Montenegro to prepare and submit to the Executive Body a revised proposal (for sulphur and NO_x emissions) in line with the goals of the Gothenburg Protocol.

59. At the session, a representative of Montenegro reported that new air pollutant emission projections were being developed within the framework of elaboration of a National Climate Change Strategy, and that the main challenge was to collect the activity data required for estimation of historical emissions.

60. The Executive Body considered the information provided by Montenegro and the respective recommendation of the EMEP Steering Body and decided to defer a decision on a proposed adjustment to its next session. The Executive Body invited the EMEP Steering Body and its Chair to continue the dialogue with the delegation of Montenegro with a view

to providing a revised proposal for Montenegro's emission ceilings in accordance with articles 2 and 13 of the Gothenburg Protocol.

VI. Future work under the 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals

61. The Executive Body considered the future work under the 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals in the light of the developments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

62. The delegation of the European Commission referred to outstanding proposals addressing emission limit values for heavy metals and mercury-containing products that had not been considered at the time of the adoption of amendments to the Protocol on Heavy Metals in 2012. It further underlined the importance of continuing scientific work under the Convention related to heavy metals.

63. The delegation of Norway stressed the importance of continuing the work under the Convention related to mercury-containing products and emission limit values, noting that, if the need arose, such work could be taken up by ad hoc expert groups under the newly established Task Force on Techno-economic Issues.

64. A representative of Canada noted that Canada considered the Minamata Convention more up to date with regard to the list of mercury-containing products than the relevant proposals submitted earlier during the negotiations on the amendments to the Protocol on Heavy Metals.

65. The representative of Belarus informed participants about the recent signing of the Minamata Convention by Belarus. Belarus was also taking steps to accede to the Protocol on Heavy Metals, as amended, although it was concerned whether its accession to the Protocol before the entry into force of the amendments would imply accession only to the original Protocol and not to the amended version.

66. The delegation of the United States noted that it considered the newly established Task Force on Techno-economic Issues as the most appropriate venue to continue the valuable work on heavy metals undertaken so far under the Convention.

67. The Executive Body:

(a) Underlined that the priority in relation to the Protocol on Heavy Metals should be given to the ratification and implementation of the amendments to the Protocol adopted in 2012, noting the importance of maintaining scientific work under the Convention related to heavy metals;

(b) Thanked the Chair of the Task Force on Heavy Metals and all the experts that had contributed to the work of the Task Force;

(c) Decided to discontinue the Task Force on Heavy Metals under the Convention as of 1 January 2015 and invited experts to participate in the activities of the new Task Force on Techno-economic Issues;

(d) Decided to defer any further discussions on the possible need to consider further amendments to the Protocol on Heavy Metals related to outstanding proposals addressing emission limit values for heavy metals and mercury-containing products to its session following the entry into force of the amendments to the Protocol;

(e) Requested the ad hoc group of legal experts to provide advice on the ratification of all amended protocols by Parties that were not Parties to the original protocols before those amended protocols enter into force.

VII. Financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention

68. The secretariat introduced the note on the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/2014/1) and informed the Executive Body about the status of Parties' contributions to the trust funds for financing the implementation of the Convention and the expenditures in 2013 and 2014. The secretariat also drew attention to a downward trend in cash contributions by Parties to co-finance the effects-oriented activities by the centres under the Working Group on Effects.

69. The secretariat reported Armenia's accession to the Convention's Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP Protocol) on 21 January 2014. In accordance with article 6, paragraph 1, of the EMEP Protocol, the United States proposed to amend the annex to the Protocol to add Armenia to it.

70. The Executive Body took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the amount of contributions made by Parties to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities as of 30 November 2014 ($432,070) and recommended to use the amount as a basis to co-fund the effects-oriented activities in 2015.

71. With respect to EMEP activities, the Executive Body:

(a) Adopted, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 3, of the EMEP Protocol and the 2013 United Nations scale of assessments, the amended annex, which now included Armenia, as set out in the annex to document ECE/EB.AIR/2014/1;

(b) Decided on the detailed use of resources in 2015 as set out in table 2 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2014/1, and on the scale of mandatory contributions as set out in table 3 of that document;

(c) Supported the EMEP Steering Body's call on the Parties to the EMEP Protocol to consider making additional voluntary contributions (in kind or in cash through the trust fund) to ensure that the work in 2015 could be accomplished as foreseen in the 2014–2015 workplan for the implementation of the Convention;

(d) Requested the Steering Body, with the assistance of its Bureau, to present the details of the 2016 budget for approval by the Executive Body at its thirty-fourth session;

(e) Urged Parties that had not yet done so to pay their 2014 contributions in cash to the trust fund and, in 2015, to pay their contributions so that they reached the trust fund in the first half of the year.

72. With respect to effects-oriented activities, the Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities for 2014, and welcomed the payments made, but also expressed disappointment at the lack of response by many Parties;

(b) Urged all Parties that had not yet done so to consider providing the recommended contributions to the trust fund for financing core activities without undue delay;

(c) Decided that the essential international coordination costs for financing the core activities of the Convention and its protocols, other than those covered by the EMEP Protocol, would be $2,152,700 in 2015, and would provisionally be $2,152,700 in 2016 and $2,152,700 in 2017;

(d) Decided to apply the 2013 United Nations scale of assessments for use in calculating the recommended contributions for 2015–2016 as set out in table 11 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2014/1;

(e) Invited the secretariat to provide the information on the amount of contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities as of 30 November 2015 at the thirty-fourth session of the Executive Body, and to use the amount as a basis to co-fund the effects-oriented activities in 2016;

(f) Requested the secretariat to inform Parties of the recommended contributions to the trust fund to meet the 2014 budget, inviting them to make them as agreed in revised decision 2002/1;

(g) Encouraged the Parties to make the recommended contributions to the trust fund before 30 November each year;

(h) Noted with appreciation the essential support provided to the Convention and its bodies by lead countries, countries hosting coordinating centres and those organizing meetings, as well as countries that funded activities of their National Focal Centres/points, and the active participation of national experts.

73. With respect to the trust fund for countries in transition, the Executive Body:

(a) Reiterated its support to that element of the work programme, the success in an enlarged implementation of the Convention in countries in transition of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia being crucial for the future of the Convention;

(b) Welcomed the contributions to the trust fund and thanked those countries that had contributed;

(c) Invited all Parties, but especially those that led task forces and expert groups, to promote activities such as special workshops in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and to collaborate with the secretariat in developing and carrying out such projects.

VIII. Activities of bodies of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and international organizations relevant to the Convention

74. A representative of UNEP provided information on the outcomes of the first United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) (Nairobi, 23–27 June 2014), particularly highlighting the provisions of its resolution 1/7 on strengthening the role of UNEP in promoting air quality. He further outlined the steps UNEP was taking in implementing the resolution, and highlighted possible areas of cooperation with the Convention.

75. The co-Chairs of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen mentioned possibilities for cooperation with UNEP on the issue of agricultural emissions as part of efforts to establish an International Nitrogen Management System.

76. The representative of the CCAC secretariat reported on the membership, objectives and activities of the Coalition. Possible areas of cooperation and cross-fertilization of experiences between the Coalition and different bodies under the Convention included: (a) the work under the Gothenburg Protocol related to emissions and inventories of black carbon and precursors of tropospheric ozone; (b) the use of scientific findings under EMEP and the Working Group on Effects; and (c) the use of guidance documents developed under the Convention to assist the members of the Coalition in fulfilling their activities. The

Coalition would be holding its upcoming annual meeting in Geneva on the margins of the World Health Assembly in May 2015.

77. The Executive Body entrusted its Bureau and the relevant subsidiary bodies under the Convention to explore opportunities and options for cooperation with CCAC and UNEP in the light of UNEA resolution 1/7.

78. The Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions[2] highlighted the existing and potential future opportunities for cooperation with the Convention, such as exchange of experience on implementation and compliance issues and the important links between the work on persistent organic pollutants under the Convention and the global efforts under the Stockholm Convention.

79. The representative of WMO provided information on WMO activities relevant to the Convention, specifically highlighting cooperation between EMEP and relevant WMO bodies.

80. The representative of the Asia Center for Air Pollution Research, a Network Center under the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), informed participants about the recent achievements and the expected future developments under EANET, also in the light of the ongoing discussions on the expansion of its mandate.

81. The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission; HELCOM) shared its activities related to the management of air pollution through an informal document submitted to the session, which included information on the cooperation between HELCOM and EMEP and on the possible effects of the implementation of the emission targets for nitrogen compounds under the amended Gothenburg Protocol on the Baltic Sea.

82. A representative of the EU provided information about the current state of the Clean Air Policy Package communicated by the European Commission in December 2013. The package included a strategy and proposals for new legislation and the EU acceptance of the amendment to the 1999 Gothenburg Protocol. The strategy aimed to resolve the current exceedances of the EU air quality standards by 2020 and to approach long-term objectives for health (WHO air quality guidelines) and for the environment (critical loads and levels as defined under the Convention) by 2030. The package also proposed new legislation through a directive setting emission standards for medium-scale combustion plants of 1 to 50 thermal megawatts, largely coherent with the 2012 amendments to the Gothenburg Protocol, as well as a new directive on national emission ceilings, setting reduction commitments for 2020 and beyond in accordance with the Gothenburg Protocol, and for 2030. The new air policy was also accompanied by a comprehensive impact assessment and a large number of underpinning studies. The related legislative proposals were now before the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament for consideration, but no date for their final adoption could yet be projected.

83. The Executive Body took note of the information provided by different Parties and organizations regarding activities relevant to the Convention.

[2] Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal; Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

IX. Election of officers

84. The Chair recalled that, at its thirty-first session (Geneva, 11–13 December 2012), the Executive Body had re-elected its Chair for a term of two years. At the same session, it had also elected a Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review for a term of two years. In accordance with rule 17 of its rules of procedure (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, decision 2010/19, annex), at its present session the Executive Body was expected to elect its Chair for a term of two years. In accordance with rule 21 of the rules of procedure, the Executive Body was also expected to elect a Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review for a term of two years.

85. The secretariat informed participants of the nominations of Mr. R. Ballaman (Switzerland) and Ms. A. Engleryd (Sweden) as Chair of the Executive Body. The secretariat also announced the nomination of Mr. W. Harnett (United States) as Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

86. The delegation of Switzerland supported the candidate from Sweden as Chair of the Executive Body.

87. The Executive Body elected Ms. Engleryd as Chair of the Executive Body for a term of two years and re-elected Mr. Harnett as Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review for a second term of two years.

88. The Executive Body also elected Mr. Ballaman as its Vice-Chair to replace the outgoing Vice-Chair, Ms. Engleryd.

X. Other business

89. In view of article 10, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Executive Body decided to meet in December 2015 back to back with the fifty-third session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

XI. Adoption of decisions taken at the thirty-third session

90. The Executive Body adopted the decisions taken at its thirty-third session on 11 December 2014 (ECE/EB.AIR/127/Add.1).

Annex

List of meetings between the thirty-third and thirty-fifth sessions of the Executive Body and list of official documents

A. List of meetings between the thirty-third and thirty-fifth (inclusive) sessions of the Executive Body

2015

March

- Joint meeting of the Extended Bureaux of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva, 16–19 March 2015)[a]
- Executive Body Bureau (Geneva, 17 March 2015)

May

- Implementation Committee (thirty-fifth session) (Budapest, 27–29 May 2015)

September

- Joint Meeting of the EMEP Steering Body (thirty-ninth session) and the Working Group on Effects (thirty-fourth session) (Geneva, 14–18 September 2015)
- Executive Body Bureau (Geneva, 14 September 2015)

December

- Working Group on Strategies and Review (fifty-third session) (Geneva, 15–17 December 2015)
- Executive Body Bureau (Geneva, 14 December 2015)
- Executive Body (thirty-fourth session) (Geneva, 18 December 2015)

2016

January–March

- Implementation Committee (thirty-sixth session) (Geneva, first quarter of the year at a date to be determined)

Early May

- Executive Body (thirty-fifth session) (Geneva, exact date to be determined)

[a] The dates changed due to unavailability of the required meeting rooms in the Palais des Nations in the last week of March.

B. List of official documents for the sessions of the Executive Body and the main subsidiary bodies

Joint meeting of the EMEP Steering Body (thirty-ninth session) and the Working Group on Effects (thirty-fourth session)

- Agenda (1 document)
- Report of the thirty-ninth session of the EMEP Steering Body and the thirty-fourth session of Working Group on Effects (1 document)
- Joint report by the EMEP Steering Body and Working Group on Effects (1 document)
- Measurements and Modelling (Task Force on Measurements and Modelling Chair's report) (1 document)
- Integrated assessment modelling (Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling Chair's report) (1 document)
- Emission inventories (Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections Chair's report) (1 document)
- Present state of emission data (report by CEIP) (1 document)
- Hemispheric transport of air pollution (Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution Chair's report) (1 document)
- Joint report (by all ICPs) (1 document)
- Thematic reports (by one or several of the ICPs) (2 documents)
- Draft workplan for 2016–2017 (1 document)

Working Group on Strategies and Review (fifty-third session)

- Report by the Working Group on Strategies and Review (1 document)
- Agenda (1 document)
- Report by the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (1 document)
- Report by the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (1 document)
- Draft guidance document on emissions from mobile sources under the Gothenburg Protocol (1 document)
- Draft guidance document on the methods for calculation of emissions of VOCs from stationary sources (1 document)
- Draft workplan for 2016–2017 (1 document)

Executive Body (thirty-fourth session)

- Agenda (1 document)
- Report of the thirty-fourth session of the Executive Body (1 document)
- Report by the Implementation Committee (1 document)
- Financial requirements for the implementation for the Convention (1 document)
- Draft workplan for 2016–2017 (1 document)

Executive Body (thirty-fifth session)

- Agenda (1 document)
- Report of the thirty-fifth session of the Executive Body (1 document)
- Report by the Implementation Committee (1 document)
- Draft recommendations from the Implementation Committee to the Executive Body (1 document)
- Final report on outreach activities (1 document)
- Summary of the Assessment Report (1 document)
- Draft guidance document on emissions from mobile sources under the Gothenburg Protocol (1 document)
- Draft guidance document on the methods for calculation of emissions of VOCs from stationary sources (1 document)
- Draft recommendations from subsidiary bodies to the Executive Body (1 document)
- Final draft of workplan for 2016–2017 (1 document)